

**Mary Peltas, Ph.D., J.D., FFACMG,  
Professor, Department of Genetics,  
Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center,  
New Orleans, LA**

Dr. Peltas is a life long resident of New Orleans, Louisiana. Her educational background includes undergraduate degrees in biology from Tulane University and a law degree from Loyola University. As part of her undergraduate training, Dr. Peltas studied at the Eberhard-Karls University, in Tübingen, Germany, during which time she began her studies of the Eugenics Movement and the issues related to human experimentation and informed consent. These interests have persisted through graduate work in genetics and in the law as it relates to personal privacy and personal autonomy. Since 1976 Dr. Peltas has taught human and medical genetics and bioethics to graduate students and medical students at the L.S.U. Health Science Center. In 1996-97 Dr. Peltas served as a AAAS Congressional Fellow in the office of Senator Peter V. Domenici, where she drafted and promoted legislation on genetic confidentiality and non-discrimination. Her scientific research programs have focused on genetics of deaf-blindness in southern Louisiana and, presently, on hereditary breast cancer in a large minority kindred located near New Orleans. Her legal research includes interests in the physician-patient relationship, informed consent and disclosure, and genetics and geneticists in contemporary society. Dr. Peltas presently serves on the Institutional Review Boards of the L.S.U. Health Science Center and the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals as well as on two legislative task forces that address questions of legislation on the assisted reproductive technologies and on a state-wide birth defects registry. With respect to national professional organizations, Dr. Peltas was active for many years in the federal programs of the Council of Regional Networks for Genetics Services, particularly in the area of informed consent in newborn screening. She presently serves on the Social Issues Committee of the American Society of Human Genetics and she chairs the Social, Ethical, and Legal Issues Committee of the American College of Medical Genetics.